

MASTER SURGEONS OF AMERICA

FRANCIS JOHN SHEPHERD

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IN Vaudreuil, near Montreal, Francis John Shepherd was born in 1851. His early education was received in local schools, and after spending a year in the Arts Faculty he entered the Faculty of Medicine, McGill University, and graduated in 1873. He then went across the Atlantic for two years' further study in the hospitals of London, Paris, and Vienna, and he was asked by McGill University to qualify as a teacher of Anatomy. This he did in his usually thorough manner. In Vienna he was joined by two distinguished graduates of McGill, George Ross, afterward professor of medicine in McGill, and William Osler, who graduated in 1872.

On his return to Montreal he was given the position of demonstrator of anatomy in the University and on the death of Professor Scott was made full professor. He established at McGill a school of human and comparative anatomy of a very high standard, recognized as such in America and in England, so that the students of McGill received a very thorough training in scientific and applied anatomy. In this work Dr. Shepherd associated with himself a number of promising young men who afterward attained enviable positions in medicine, surgery, and the specialties. After twenty-five years' service as professor of anatomy he was tendered a banquet by his past and present assistants on the teaching staff and by them given a fine silver coffee service.

Dr. Shepherd's interest in medical students was not confined to teaching them anatomy. Together with Ross and Osler, he founded an undergraduate society of medical students with regular meetings for the discussion of interesting questions.

He was always interested in the development of the pathological museum, particularly the anatomical anomalies, of which he had accumulated a large and rare collection. Unfortunately, this collection was lost in a fire which destroyed the building in which they were housed.

The Montreal Medico-Chirurgical Society enjoyed a period of unusual prosperity under the stimulating influence of Osler, Ross, and Shepherd. For many years he was one of the editors of the *Montreal Medical Journal* and contributed a surgical retrospect for each number that was critical, instructive, and interesting. These retrospects were afterward published in book form.

In 1883, he was elected full surgeon to the Montreal General Hospital and organized a course of summer clinics for students who remained in Montreal during the summer months. These clinics were very popular and much appreciated.

While in Vienna, Dr. Shepherd took a special course in dermatology under Hebra, and on his return started a department of dermatology in the Montreal General Hospital. His interest in the subject continued to the end. In 1907 he was named vice-president of the Dermatological Congress held in New York and in 1928 was made president of the Canadian Branch of the British Dermatological Society.

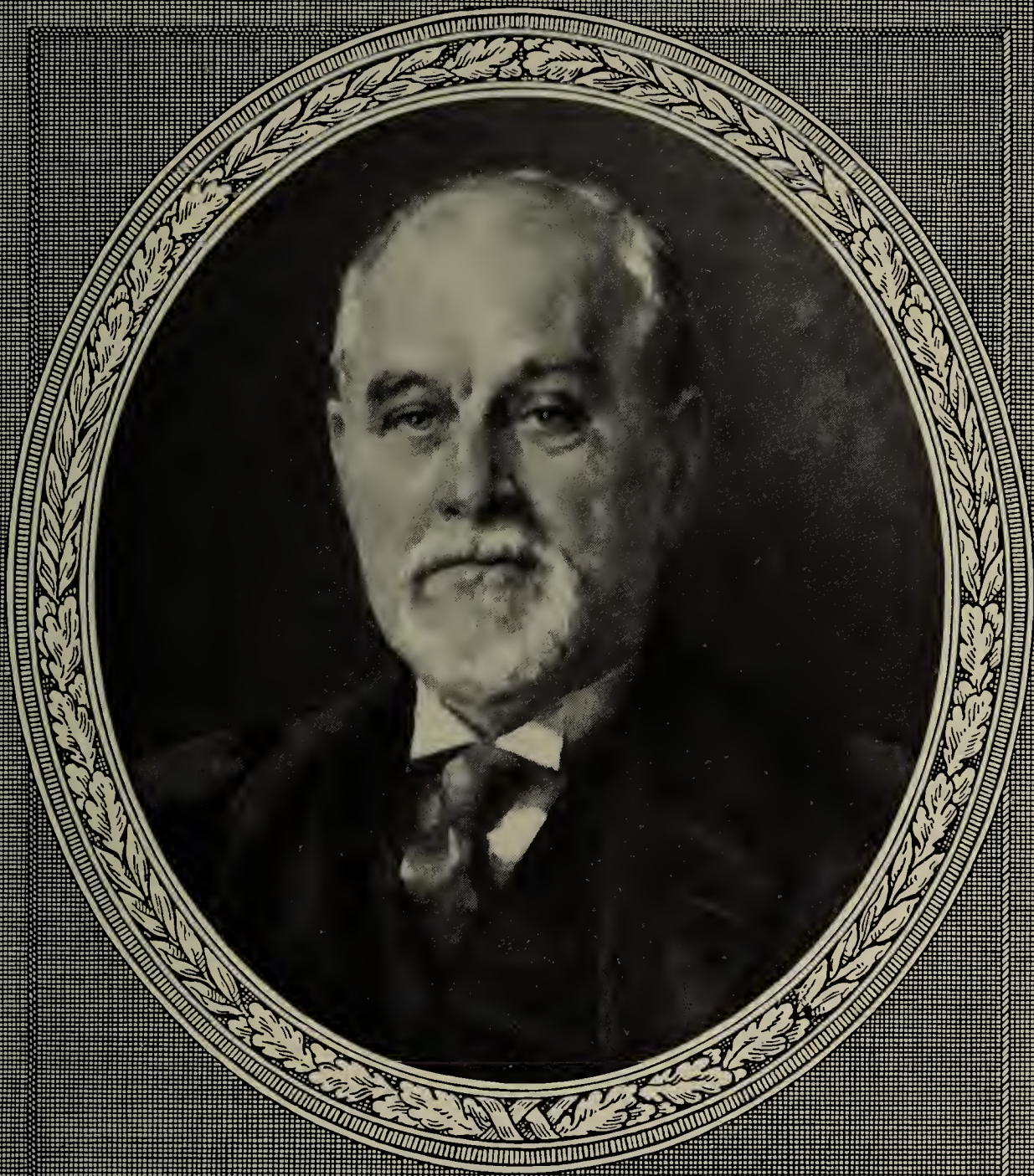
Dr. Shepherd's surgical work merits the highest praise. He was a most careful diagnostician, and his operative work was bold and progressive yet at the same time conservative. He was particularly interested in the development of the surgery of the thyroid. I was intimately associated with him for many years and always found his opinion sound. Under his teaching in the old summer sessions many young men received a training in surgery at the beginning of their career that left an impress that was never lost. Always careful, the interest of his patient was ever foremost in his mind.

Dr. Shepherd's work in anatomy, dermatology, and surgery was appreciated outside his native land. In 1913, he was chosen to act as vice-president of the department of surgery at the International Medical Congress in London. He received an honorary fellowship from the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, and had the degree of doctor of laws conferred upon him by the University. He also received the much prized honor of the honorary fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. The degree of doctor of laws was conferred upon him by Harvard University in 1906, by McGill in 1915, and by Queens in 1919. He was also made an honorary fellow of the American College of Surgeons. He was elected corresponding member of the Société Internationale de Chirurgie of Paris, and foreign member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

In 1924, his numerous friends in the profession presented him with a portrait of himself, by Miss Des Clayes. This now hangs in the large hall of the medical building of McGill University along with the portraits of previous deans. He was dean of the Medical Faculty 1908-1914, president of the Medico-Chirurgical Society in 1894, and president of the Canadian Medical Association in 1901.

Dr. Shepherd contributed liberally to medical literature. In addition to his *Surgical Retrospect* already mentioned, he was joint author of *American Textbook of Surgery*, author of the article "The Thyroid" in the *American Practice of Surgery*. He contributed to the *Annals of Surgery*, *Journal of Anatomy and Physiology*, *Canadian Medical and Surgical Journal*, *British Medical Journal*, and *Lancet*.

Dr. Shepherd had many outside interests. He was fond of nature and fishing, and had a lovely country home at Como on the Ottawa river where he entertained



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his friends in royal fashion. He was particularly fond of art, especially of oil painting, and indeed was regarded as an authoritative critic. He was president of the Montreal Art Association from 1906 to 1910, and in 1918 he was again persuaded to take that position which he was still occupying at the time of his death. On the occasion of his seventy-seventh birthday, he was presented with a bronze bust of himself by a circle of his friends in the association.

For many years he was a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery at Ottawa and recently chairman of the board. He was keenly alive to the value to the country of collections of fine art, not only for educational purposes but for the increase of national pride in art and a stimulus to all who may be able to enrich their country with further valuable examples.

The public will remember Dr. Shepherd's achievements; his patients will remember him as a kindly and skilled physician and surgeon; his associates and friends will cherish the remembrance of his character. He was frank, outspoken, versatile, and a man of unimpeachable integrity. Dr. Shepherd was a widower for many years. He had one son, whom he lost in the war, and two daughters—Mrs. Nobbs, and Miss Dorothy—who devoted her life to the care of her father.

On January 17, 1929, he was at his club and in a particularly happy mood. The following morning when his breakfast was taken in to his room he seemed cheerful as usual. When a little later the servant returned to take away the tray, she found him sitting up in bed, his spectacles on, the morning paper in his hand, but he had passed on.

